

SISTER OF PRIDE OF THE SHOOTING Mrs. Gaines Describes the Scene That Led Up to the Killing of Bywaters.

BEGGED HER TO REMAIN Mrs. Bywaters Deplored the Fact That She Had Been Forced to Marry.

HUSBAND'S DUTY POINTED OUT Dramatic Recital of the Incidents Preceding the Death of the Newly Made Husband—What Culpeper People Say About the Crime.

Special From a Staff Correspondent.

CULPEPER, Va., December 19.—The inquest in the Bywaters case at Culpeper was begun shortly before noon today.

Before the hearing was begun the coroner and jury reported to the mayor's office in order to accommodate those who had to take part in the hearing. Mrs. Gaines, attired in a black costume and apparently self-composed, was the first witness examined.

"When I reached the house Saturday," she stated, "my brothers said to me, 'It's all over, they are married.' Witness went to her sister's room and found her alone and weeping bitterly. She said, 'Oh, Nellie, why did they make me marry him? They have broken my heart because they made me marry him.' I tried to comfort her the best I could."

"Now that you are married it's your husband's duty to remain with you, and it's my duty to go back and stay with my children. She insisted upon my staying, but I told her it was impossible for me to do so, and told her her husband would have to stay. He said it was impossible for him to stay there. Witness said when she went downstairs to see her husband he was in the sitting room with her two brothers. She told Bywaters that he would have to remain, and he said he would have to go back to town to make some business arrangements and tell his mother. He also said he wanted to get his announcement cards out by morning."

"My sister seemed to be in a dying condition, but the necessity of his remaining with her seemed to be a trifling matter with him."

**Bywaters Furious.** She said that Bywaters became furious when she tried to persuade him to remain, and he was rather insulting in his manner. Witness said she told him he was the lowest dog that ever lived, telling him that he had taken her sister to Washington and had an operation performed in the cruelest manner.

She told him she had been with her sister for two days and had witnessed her physical and mental agony, and added that now he wanted to leave her without any protection. "I told him I prayed to God that the child might have died rather than to see her in the life she would have to live with him."

Witness said she laughed at her and sneered in her face. "My husband then told Bywaters he wanted to tell him what he thought of him. He had violated every obligation as an odd fellow and a gentleman."

"Bywaters said: 'Yes, I know it—you and the odd fellows, what have you got to do with me?' Mrs. Gaines said that Bywaters used every vile epithet that he could think of in her face and in the face of her brothers and threatened her husband, mentioning a knife. Her brothers kept her husband, but I witness was asked, 'Did your sister ask your brothers not to shoot?'

"Did your sister spring out of bed when the shots were fired?" "She did," she said.

"She didn't say anything, but she ran about the house screaming."

"How that account for her being downstairs when we got there?" the coroner asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you not recall anything her sister said while she was screaming?"

**Lemon First on Scene.** John Lemon, she said, was the first person to reach the house after the shooting occurred.

He called there in response to a telephone message sent him informing him that somebody had been shot.

"Did either of your brothers go upon the roof after the shooting occurred?" "No, sir."

Mr. Lemon, she stated, was the first person to go through the room in which her husband had been confined and go out upon the roof.

"Mrs. Gaines," asked Capt. Wood, "do you know if your husband was armed?" "Mrs. Gaines was the response."

"Where is Mrs. Bywaters now, and where has she been since the shooting?" "She is in my house," she responded.

"Did you know Bywaters was going with your sister?" "Yes, she was her response."

"Where were the Strothers boys all the time the shooting was going on?" asked Attorney Jeffries.

"They were in my sister's room."

"Asked by Mr. Jeffries what idea she meant to convey when she said not a shot was fired in the room the witness said she meant that they did not fire until he was out of the room."

"Who telephoned over to town after the shooting occurred?" asked Mr. Jeffries.

"Jim," she answered.

"What did Phil do?"

"He was after the shooting. When Mr. Lemon found that Bywaters was dead, he asked her for some water for Bywaters. Then he came and asked if there was any whisky in the house, and she gave a half pint flask of liquor that had been purchased for her sister."

"Mrs. Gaines said she thought Senator Jeffries was at the house at the time Mr. Lemon came down and announced that Bywaters was dead."

"She recollected hearing counsel say that the body should not be disturbed until the commonwealth attorney and the sheriff were notified."

"What relation were you and your brothers and sisters to Will Bywaters?"

"Will Bywaters, she answered, "was one of my mother's nearest relatives, but I don't know the degree of relationship. He was treated as one of her near relations and was taken into her home as such."

"Is your father living?" "No, sir."

The inquiry is still on.

STORY OF THE CRIME.

No Excitement in Culpeper—No Prospect of Trouble.

Special From a Staff Correspondent.

CULPEPER, Va., December 19.—Any

reference to alleged excitement supposed to have been caused by the shooting of William F. Bywaters last Saturday is met with the query, "What excitement?" and with the prompt response, "There has been no excitement here." The residents of Culpeper do not understand why the shooting of Bywaters, at all Bywaters, as called, should have caused any excitement in town. He was killed way out in the country and the details of the crime were obtained only by piecemeal, so that by the time the whole story was made known the time for excitement had passed. There was nothing about the town last night to indicate that anything unusual had happened. It has been anything to indicate that a hostile demonstration was even anticipated. James and Philip Strother, brothers of Mrs. William F. Bywaters, who riddled the body of their brother-in-law with bullets, are usually called a sturdy and brave member of their family by the act of the Rev. J. W. Ware of the Episcopal Church, rode through the streets of Culpeper on Saturday night, and had ever happened in their lives to cause them trouble.

"People 'rubbed' at them," said a merchant, "but said nothing more than to speak to them the same as they had when they were in town last week."

Viewed the House.

The Strother boys spoke to acquaintances as they passed, and upon more than one occasion they stopped and conversed with friends. Having attended to their business, they left town and went to the house where the tragedy was enacted Saturday. At the house they visited the room which the wrong sister lay Saturday at the time Will Bywaters is alleged to have made an effort to desert his bride of two hours, and from which the dead body of the victim had to be removed by Sheriff Pulliam and others.

When the Strother boys had shot down Will Bywaters on the public street, a resident of the town said last night, "There might have been some commotion, but doing it in their own home out in the country robbed it of some of its sentimental features."

"I think some of the people are disappointed that the killing did not occur upon the streets."

Excitement has not been interrupted because of the shooting nor are any residents of the town losing much sleep over the affair. Some of them, but as he is said with responsibility for the prosecution of the brothers and counsel who are to appear in court for them. Farmers are bringing in their loads of turkeys for the Christmas holidays, just the same as they would have done had Will Bywaters been the fox hunter and a merchant is doing their annual holiday business.

Great Deal of Interest.

The dramatic scene that was enacted at "Hothorwood" interests all the people in the town and most of the residents of the county on account of the prominence of the parties, and the case has been freely discussed by friends of both sides. Will Bywaters has an interesting and more than a little bit of a reputation as a sportsman, and was a man who always presented a good appearance. He was gentlemanly and courteous, and while he was not a sportsman, he was exceedingly fond of sports. It was the kind of sport that is calculated to uplift the soul of some one who is probably a little bit of a sportsman, but as he is said to have admitted before he became the husband of his cousin, he did what he could to degrade her as well as himself, and he was willing to take her to Washington and have her risk her life in the hands of a doctor who probably would have paid a big fee for his alleged criminal operation. Having seen that she was returned to her home in an almost dying condition, he was very angry.

In Washington Thursday.

He was in Washington last Thursday, two days before the marriage and death ceremonies were conducted, and got a check cashed for \$5. Then he came here probably not suspecting that he would be known as the one who had accomplished the ruin of an estimable young woman, and had the property of her father, Robert Matthews, a lumberer and the dealer, and C. S. Jones, a farmer, are the other jurors.

Contents of Defense.

It will be contended by the defense that Will Bywaters never had any idea of remaining with the victim. It is stated, and there will be other and perhaps more sensational features of the case shown. Everybody who knew the two families unites in the opinion that the late husband of the Strother house as he was here with his mother. Her brothers, it was said, were frequently with him from the house, and they were often heard to remark "that the girls were all right. Will Bywaters will look after them." It was a common remark that they were heard to make. He asked no questions nor did he offer any explanations. All went well until about a month ago, when Will Bywaters and the victim were in the same room, and the victim was charged with a crime.

Played Parts Well.

The young people played their parts well until the condition of Miss Strother became so serious that the family physician had to be called. Then she could not hold out any longer. It happened that George Welch, W. Va., and James Welch, Jr., of the French physician, and the attorney at Welch, were conveniently at home for the Christmas holidays when the subject of the ruin of her sister was suggested. Philip Strother, who was the attorney at Welch, was conveniently at home. He is perhaps one of the most prosperous farmers in Culpeper county, owning and farming about 200 acres of land.

Bywaters a Cousin.

It is said that he and his brothers had always taken a deep interest in the welfare of their cousin, Will Bywaters, and when they became aware of what he had done they were inclined to act rather more harshly than they would have done under other circumstances; but, however, they would probably not have spoken any other person who had taken such a mean advantage of their sister. When the truth finally became known, the brothers, who had deviously treated her, treated her as they would treat their sister the same as they would treat a viper, delayed the killing because of the possibility of a large reward on the part of their sister and cousin.

The Story Not Yet Told.

The license was procured, the parson summoned, and there in the sick chamber the trembling hand of a woman who was thought to have been upon her deathbed and that of the man who is really dead and has been lying in bed since the time he was shot, were clasped, and in the presence of witnesses he declared he would by a true, devoted and loving husband. That was at 5 o'clock Saturday afternoon, and the two hours he remained the husband of the young woman were perhaps the most precious hours of his life ever spent. What really occurred in the room and on the tin roof of the porch will probably not be fully known until the coroner has had time to investigate. It is stated, had not Dr. E. L. Gaines, the husband of one of the Strother sisters, headed him off at the door, a larger sum would have been paid. It is stated, had not Dr. E. L. Gaines, the husband of one of the Strother sisters, headed him off at the door, a larger sum would have been paid. It is stated, had not Dr. E. L. Gaines, the husband of one of the Strother sisters, headed him off at the door, a larger sum would have been paid.

Behind Closed Doors.

"If I had my way," stated Coroner Lewis last night, "I would have had the doors closed, and I would not have had a newspaper reporter in the room, and when Mrs. Bywaters is called upon to give her testimony I shall most positively object to any outsiders being present to embarrass her. She will probably have to tell some things that she would rather not tell. She should not be submitted to any more terrible ordeal than is necessary."

"It happens," said the coroner, "that a small room, and when the six jurors, the coroner and counsel get in there about all the available space will be taken up by the witnesses and the Strother boys went to the house where the scenes were enacted Saturday, they met

their counsel J. L. Jeffries, former state senator, and E. H. Gibson, who is one of the leading members of the bar here, George French Strother and Robert Taylor, brother-in-law, were also there. The men discussed the tragedy and explained to counsel just what they had done. The two brothers, Strother and Will Bywaters, reached home with the marriage license until the time the shooting occurred. The body of the dead body of the victim was removed from the house of Mrs. Gaines, her sister.

He Will Represent the Bywaters Family at Inquest.

Special Dispatch to The Star. CULPEPER, Va., December 19.—Col. Michael Woods of Charlottesville, who conducted the successful prosecution of Mayor McCue of that city for murder, arrived here last night to participate in the inquest into the case against the Strother brothers for the killing of their brother-in-law, William F. Bywaters. He came to represent the Bywaters family, and his appearance on the scene increased the interest in the case. There was not the rush for admittance to the coroner's hearing this morning that had been anticipated, and the coroner's office was crowded with curious people from gathering upon the sidewalks to get a glimpse of the witnesses and others who are participating in the inquest. Owing to a delay on the part of former Senator Jeffries in reaching here this morning the hearing was not begun until 10 o'clock. Col. Woods, and his wife, the latter a sister of Mrs. Bywaters, were the first witnesses to appear at the coroner's office.

RIOTING IN NANTES SERIOUS TROUBLE OVER NEW CHURCH LAWS.

NANTES, France, December 19.—Much rioting attended the evacuation of the episcopal palace and seminary here today. Crowds of Catholic manifestos overcame the police, who were compelled to draw their revolvers, and under threats of opening fire, keep back the mob until rescued by troops. Several women were arrested for striking or biting soldiers.

Many Places Vacated.

PARIS, December 19.—The reports received by the minister of the interior show that thirty-four ecclesiastical residences occupied by archbishops or bishops, and forty large and thirteen small seminaries have thus far been evacuated under the provisions of the church and state separation law.

Death Rather Than Sacrilege.

LILLE, France, December 19.—A court-martial here today tried and degraded Capt. Magniez for refusing to obey orders in connection with taking the inventory of the episcopal palace. The case promises to be the most interesting criminal trial that has taken place in Culpeper county for a number of years. According to the statement of one of the attorneys interested in the case, the case will be a sensational one. "Unwritten law." It is realized that counsel for the defense will have to contend with the fact that the late husband of the victim, who was a sportsman, was a man who always presented a good appearance. He was gentlemanly and courteous, and while he was not a sportsman, he was exceedingly fond of sports. It was the kind of sport that is calculated to uplift the soul of some one who is probably a little bit of a sportsman, but as he is said to have admitted before he became the husband of his cousin, he did what he could to degrade her as well as himself, and he was willing to take her to Washington and have her risk her life in the hands of a doctor who probably would have paid a big fee for his alleged criminal operation. Having seen that she was returned to her home in an almost dying condition, he was very angry.

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